



# Washington State Department of Agriculture

PO Box 42560  
Olympia, Washington 98504-2560  
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Contact: [Mike Louisell](#) (360) 902-1813

## **\$4 million up for competition in specialty crop grants through WSDA**

**OLYMPIA** – The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](http://www.wa.gov/agriculture) (WSDA) is accepting proposals for new projects to support the state's fruit, vegetable and nursery industry through the federal Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Proposals are due to WSDA by 4 p.m. Feb. 26.

WSDA manages the grants, which are funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). About \$4 million will be available to support Washington's specialty crop industry.

Private and non-profit organizations, commodity commissions and other public entities may request funds for projects of \$25,000 to \$250,000 that benefit the competitiveness of fruit, vegetable, tree nut and nursery crop producers.

The first step in applying for a grant is to submit a brief concept proposal using a form provided by WSDA. The proposals should be sent to [specialtycrop@agr.wa.gov](mailto:specialtycrop@agr.wa.gov) for review by WSDA. Successful applicants will be asked to submit full proposals for further review. Visit [www.agr.wa.gov/grants/scbgp](http://www.agr.wa.gov/grants/scbgp) for application information, forms and the milestone schedules. For additional information, go to the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service at [www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/scbgp) or contact WSDA's Leisa Schumaker at [lschumaker@agr.wa.gov](mailto:lschumaker@agr.wa.gov) or (360) 902-2091.

Based on feedback from Washington's specialty crop industries, WSDA is seeking projects that promote international and domestic trade, control pests and diseases, reduce regulatory barriers, sustain and enhance the agriculture workforce, develop organic and sustainable production practices, increase the number of new specialty crop farmers and processors, improve efficiency and reduce costs of distribution systems, and increase production through innovative technologies.

Projects that benefit Washington's specialty crop producers and food processors in other ways or that benefit new farmers or socially disadvantaged farmers are also encouraged.

Washington ranks third in the nation in production of specialty crops and last year funded [27 projects](#) under USDA's specialty crop program. USDA will announce their awards this fall and WSDA grant agreements will be issued soon after.

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